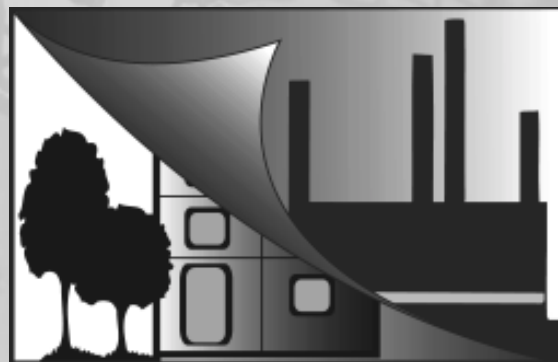




RCRA Brownfields Prevention: Working Together to Clean Up and Revitalize RCRA Facilities



RCRA Brownfields



*Cleanup of RCRA
brownfields revitalizes
neighborhoods, preserves
greenfields, and can bring
new life to blighted areas and
surrounding communities.*



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As part of its mission to protect human health and the environment, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is committed to cleaning up and enabling revitalization of contaminated sites.

Working Together to Clean Up and Revitalize RCRA Facilities

Many former industrial and commercial properties in communities across the country are underused, idle, or have been abandoned. Some of these properties are, in fact, contaminated, while others are just suspected of being contaminated. These blighted areas are called “brownfields.” Brownfields can pose safety and health risks for residents and also depress local economies. The potential contamination associated with these sites often deters lenders, investors, and developers from investing in their redevelopment. Cleaning up brownfields for redevelopment saves farmland, pastures, and natural areas by reusing existing abandoned or underused properties rather than building new facilities on valuable open space, “greenfields,” or agricultural lands.

Some brownfield properties contain facilities that have been hazardous waste treatment, storage, or disposal facilities regulated under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). In some cases, part of a brownfield property might not be regulated currently under RCRA, but the land may be contaminated with hazardous wastes that may make it subject to RCRA requirements when it is cleaned up. In many of these cases, the property owner/operator, the state, developers, and EPA can work together to find solutions to brownfield problems.



A Commitment to Cleanup and Preventing New Brownfields

EPA works in partnership with states and with local communities, owner/operators of RCRA facilities, and other stakeholders to prevent new brownfields by finding new, more efficient, and faster ways to clean up and revitalize RCRA facilities. EPA has launched several initiatives to help make this happen:

EPA Brownfields Funding for Some RCRA Facilities

Under the new Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act of 2002, funding may be available for assessing and cleaning up some categories of RCRA sites. Subject to funding availability, brownfields grants will be given annually for revolving loan funds, site assessment, and site cleanup. Eligible entities that can apply for brownfields assessment funding, revolving loan funding, and cleanup grants include local governments; land clearance authorities or other quasi-governmental entities under the control of or as an agent for a local government; regional councils; redevelopment agencies; states; entities created by a state legislature; Indian Tribes (other than in Alaska); Alaska Native Regional Corporations; and Alaska Native Village Corporations. These eligible entities, as well as non-profit organizations¹, also can apply for direct cleanup grants to clean up properties that they own. For more information and brownfields application guidelines, visit the EPA Brownfields Program web site at: <http://www.epa.gov/brownfields>.

¹The term “nonprofit organization” means any corporation, trust, association, cooperative, or other organization that is operated primarily for scientific, educational, service, charitable, or similar purpose in the public interest; is not organized primarily for profit; and uses net proceeds to maintain, improve, or expand the operation of the organization.

RCRA Cleanup Reforms

The 1999 and 2001 RCRA Cleanup Reforms encourage streamlining of processes and innovative approaches, address key impediments to cleanups, maximize program flexibility, and spur progress toward ambitious national cleanup goals. EPA works with the states to accelerate cleanups by using innovative and results-oriented approaches to achieve faster, focused, more flexible cleanups and to foster creative solutions to cleanup-related challenges.

The RCRA Brownfields Prevention Initiative

The RCRA Brownfields Prevention Initiative encourages innovation in the RCRA program to speed up cleanups, promote dialogue and partnerships between the public and private sectors, and integrate reuse and redevelopment issues into cleanup decisions, whenever appropriate. This multi-faceted effort includes:

- showcasing cleanup and revitalization approaches through RCRA brownfields pilots;
- resolving barriers to cleanup and revitalization with targeted site efforts;
- supporting a variety of outreach efforts to EPA Regional offices, states and the RCRA community through conferences, training, Internet seminars, and the RCRA Brownfields webpage; and



- identifying policies that inadvertently may be hindering cleanup and addressing them with guidance, technical assistance, and other means.

What makes the RCRA Brownfields Prevention Initiative unique is that it links EPA's Brownfields Program and EPA and state cleanup programs to help communities address contaminated, often blighted properties that may stand in the way of economic vitality.

Here are a few examples:

- *By emphasizing partnership approaches to RCRA cleanup, the State of Wisconsin has helped transform 69 underutilized, contaminated, and blighted acres of downtown Kenosha into **Harbor Park**, an integrated center of activity with residential, recreational, cultural, commercial, and transportation facilities. The center's efficient design complements the site's waterfront location and the adjacent marina and downtown area. Teamwork among the state, property owner, tenant, and city was critical to the realization of this project.*
- *Through a multi-stakeholder effort and creative use of regulatory tools, RCRA cleanup and redevelopment processes were streamlined, and an idled, 138-acre property in midtown Atlanta is being transformed into **Atlantic Station**, a major complex that will contain residential, retail, office, recreational, and transportation facilities. This cleanup and revitalization is expected to bring 30,000 jobs and 10,000 residents to the area and increase the city's tax base. The project also is expected to help Atlanta comply with air quality standards, improve transportation efficiency, and reduce the*

Partnerships among federal, state, and local governments, communities, and other stakeholders can expedite RCRA cleanups and help revitalize communities.

development of greenspace at the edges of the city. The close working relationship among EPA, the State of Georgia, the City of Atlanta, the site owner, the developer, and local neighborhoods is an example of a progressive approach to RCRA cleanup.

- Working together to integrate RCRA corrective action with Pennsylvania's voluntary cleanup program, EPA and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania are helping to expedite cleanup and redevelopment of **PECO Energy**, a former utility site in Chester, Pennsylvania. PECO Energy (now the Exelon Corporation) is under a RCRA consent order and is remediating soil and groundwater. A developer purchased a major portion of the property and plans to renovate the old coal-fired power plant into an office building that will become corporate headquarters for a high-tech company. The rest of the property will be converted into additional office and commercial space. PECO Energy/Exelon has donated a portion of the property to the City of Chester for recreational uses. Redevelopment of the property is expected to provide commercial and recreational space to a disadvantaged community and create an estimated 3,000 jobs.

**For
More
Information**

Consult these web pages for more information about:

EPA's RCRA Brownfields Prevention Initiative: <http://www.epa.gov/swerosps/rcrabf/>

EPA's Brownfields Program and Brownfields Proposal Guidelines: <http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

EPA's RCRA Cleanup Reforms: <http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/hazwaste/ca/reforms.htm>



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